

Pay Legal Fines By Computer In L.B.

By Joe Poneplinto

Executive Editor

It's difficult to know which is the greater penalty—the fine one has to pay after getting a speeding ticket, or standing in line at the Long Beach Municipal Courthouse to pay it.

Starting today, the courthouse will feature two automated clerk machines, which will allow people to pay traffic and moving violation fines, as well as a variety of other functions.

The machines will be opened today at 11 a.m., at an "electronic" ribbon-cutting ceremony led by County Supervisor Deane Dana.

The computers feature touch-screen technology that lets users point to the function they wish to engage. Instructions will be presented in English and Spanish.

By following these, people will be able to complete nearly every function they normally had to wait in line at traffic court for, including continuing a ticket, pleading not guilty or signing up for traffic school.

According to Kim Normandin, vice president of Marketing for North Communications, the Santa Monica-based manufacturer, payments can be made on tickets written by any county or local agency in the Long Beach/Signal Hill area,

from the Long Beach Police Department to the California Highway Patrol.

The Auto Clerks will accept checks, and bank and credit cards, but not cash.

Auto Clerk will also provide available court dates and schedule future appearances. Information on Small Claims Court filings and trial procedures will also be offered. The actual filing of such forms, however, will still have to be done in the courthouse.

The computer systems link the machines via IBM AS/400 computers to the county's central data processing center in Downey.

Normandin said the two Auto Clerks in Long Beach will be the first of their kind, however, the company has been in busi-

ness since 1986 manufacturing similar touch-screen systems. Their Info-California system was initiated last October, and allows people to receive information and apply for state jobs at 15 locations in the state. They have also installed a touch-screen welfare center in Tulare and work on systems around the world.

Normandin said that North Communications is working on a Vital Records system, that would give people access to birth certificates and other personal documents, that is expected to go on-line in April, and a touch-screen system for the Department of Motor Vehicles that could begin in June and allow people to register cars and renew licenses without traveling to the department.



IT'S THE LAW. Two automated legal clerk machines will go into service today at the Long Beach Courthouse. Here, a TV crew from Channel 11 makes a tape of the computer in action.



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